

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Increased risk for urinary tract infections, candidiasis, or bacterial vaginosis.

Call your clinician for signs of infection including pain on urination, blood in the urine, fever, frequent urination, vaginal itching, burning, or discharge.

Rare cases of toxic shock syndrome (TSS) have been reported with diaphragm use.

### Symptoms of TSS include:

**sudden high fever,  
diarrhea, vomiting;  
sore throat, aching muscles & joints;  
dizziness, faintness, weakness; or,  
a sunburn-type rash.**

If symptoms occur, call your clinician at the local health department; if unavailable, contact your physician or go to the hospital emergency room.



**Kootenai County**  
8500 N. Atlas Road  
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208 415-5100

**Bonner County**  
1020 Michigan  
Sandpoint ID 83864  
208 263-5159

**Boundary County**  
7402 Caribou  
Bonners Ferry ID 83805  
208 267-5558

**Benewah County**  
711 Jefferson  
St. Maries ID 83861  
208 245-4556

**Shoshone County**  
114 W Riverside  
Kellogg ID 83837  
208 786-7474

**PANHANDLE HEALTH  
DISTRICT**

## THE DIAPHRAGM

*Informational  
Brochure*



**Panhandle Health District**

*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

**(208) 415-5100**

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## WHAT IS A DIAPHRAGM?

Diaphragms are soft rubber barriers that cover the cervix. It is shaped like a dome and has a flexible rim. It fits in the vagina and over the cervix. The diaphragm should be used with contraceptive jelly or cream.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

It blocks the opening of the uterus and keeps the sperm from entering. The jelly or cream immobilizes the sperm.

## HOW EFFECTIVE IS IT?

The diaphragm is 80% effective. Of 100 women using diaphragms, about 18 will become pregnant during the first year of use. Of 100 women who use them correctly and consistently, about six will become pregnant in the first year of use.

## HOW TO GET IT?

A pelvic examination by a clinician is needed to be fitted for the correct size. The clinician will also provide instructions for use, insertion and removal.

Diaphragms are available in a wide variety of sizes. They will need to be refitted after:

- φ a full-term pregnancy
- φ abdominal or pelvic surgery
- φ miscarriage or abortion
- φ weight gain or loss of 10 pounds or more.

## HOW TO USE THE DIAPHRAGM

- φ Insert up to six hours before intercourse.
- φ Put about a teaspoonful of spermicide in the cup and spread some around the rim (never use Vaseline or cold cream).
- φ Find a comfortable position—standing with one leg up, lying down, or squatting.
- φ Separate the lips of your vagina with one hand and, with the other, pinch the rim of the diaphragm to fold it in half. Place index finger in the center of the fold for a firmer grip.
- φ Insert it as far back as it will go behind the mouth of the cervix. Push the front rim up until it is locked in place behind the pubic bone. You should be able to feel the cervix through the rubber, it will feel like the end of your nose. It is normal to feel folds in the diaphragm when it is in place.
- φ If intercourse is repeated, insert another application of contraceptive cream, jelly or foam into the vagina for repeated intercourse, and the diaphragm must stay in place 6-8 hours after the last intercourse. DO NOT leave the diaphragm in place for more than 24 hours.
- φ To remove, hook a finger over the top of the rim to break the suction; pull the diaphragm out gently.



## ADVANTAGES

- φ They offer some protection against pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).
- φ They do not interrupt sex play if inserted ahead of time.
- φ They generally cannot be felt by either partner.
- φ They can be carried conveniently in a pocket or purse.

## DISADVANTAGES

- φ It may be difficult for some women to insert diaphragms.
- φ A woman must be willing to insert the diaphragm every time she has vaginal intercourse.
- φ Diaphragms require refitting every 1-2 years.
- φ Diaphragms may become dislodged if the woman is on top during intercourse.
- φ Using a diaphragm will not give you protection against HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, herpes, genital warts, gonorrhea, hepatitis B and syphilis.

## CARE OF DIAPHRAGMS

- φ Wash with mild, non-perfumed soap and warm water.
- φ Let air dry in open air.
- φ Do not use powders or oil-based lubricants.
- φ Examine regularly against a light for small holes or weak spots.
- φ Women should have pelvic examinations, including a Pap smear once a year.
- φ The diaphragm should be checked for wear and size by your clinician yearly.